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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

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Wednesday, 31 August 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	China	Mr. Xu Zhongsheng
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Fesko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): Let me begin by congratulating Malaysia and your team, Mr. President, for conducting the Security Council's work so well during this past month. We want to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting and for providing a very useful focus for our discussions, including on conflict-prevention and on the Council's working methods. In our view, the Council's capability to prevent conflict is inherently linked to its methods of work and to the way Council members relate with each other and with the Secretariat. I want to make a couple of points on two related subjects, namely, the importance of timely information from the Secretariat and some observations on confidentiality.

For the Council to act early, it is important that it be aware of the potential threats and security. We need to be well informed of developments where the Council has a mandate to respond. In situations where there are conflicting narratives of developments, the Secretariat has a particularly important role in providing an authoritative account. We saw that last week with the briefing on Western Sahara, which was very useful in providing a clear account of developments on a contentious and sensitive issue. In situations that are developing rapidly, it is vital that all Council members be brought up to speed on the situation on the ground quickly. Otherwise, elected members can be at a significant disadvantage in such matters.

Council members also need to be informed of broader emerging issues and potential crises where a political impasse risks boiling over, or where regional issues threaten to aggravate a fragile peace. We are thankful for the efforts that the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs has been making in that regard. As Council members, we need to continue to apply political energy and creativity on this issue — one that we are going to take up next month in our presidency of the Council.

The question of the timeliness of information also relates to the reverse issue of confidentiality. During our 20 months on the Council, we have championed the importance of transparency in the Council's work as an important element of our responsibility to the membership that elected us, and of our own legitimacy, as the Security Council acts on their behalf. But confidentiality is an important counterpoint to transparency. The Secretariat cannot provide frank assessments if they are immediately relayed outside the Consultations Room. The members of the Council cannot have meaningful political-level exchanges when sensitive discussions are repeated verbatim. Ideas cannot be tested and explored and instead become limited to set-piece interventions, safe for public consumption, not the frank exchange that is necessary when dealing with complex and novel issues. In our view, we need to do much better in ensuring that confidentiality is respected as much as appropriate. If the Consultations Room is not private, inevitably discussions will go elsewhere, which is not in anyone's interests.

We look forward to hearing further from the new Council members on their reflections. I know that I can count on members' support in the month ahead.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I congratulate you, Mr. President — Ramlan — and your team for everything you have done in the successful month of August. I think we have done a lot under your leadership. We have reacted to a lot going on in the world, and so I am glad that you have found time for this wrap-up session. I will keep my remarks short and focused on a couple of issues, as, you Sir, suggested in the helpful concept note.

First, with regard to conflict prevention and, secondly, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, the link between the two issues is transparency. I therefore very much agree with what Gerard just said about that and, indeed, with his other point about the flow of information from the Secretariat. Just to take one example of conflict prevention where we have failed as a Council, I would mentin Syria. I thought we had a good meeting yesterday on chemical weapons in Syria. But when we look at the five-year history of the conflict, the Council has failed to have any real impact on politically resolving the conflict, and still less in preventing it in the first

place. A lot of the effort to try to do that has to take place, inevitably, in private, but there are risks when we do too much in private. Again, I very much agree with what Gerard was saying about confidentiality about things that need to remain confidential — but equally, I think some things can be more transparent. I think we would benefit from more confidentiality on some issues and more transparency on others. Trying to hide the scale and nature of the Syrian conflict from the wider world is not something that benefits conflict prevention or the search for peace.

If we take the situation in Aleppo as the most extreme example, where the suffering of the Syrian people is at its most extreme, it is a telling example of a reality that, however bad we think it might be, can always get worse. Our job here is to try to shine a spotlight publicly on the situation there in order to try to bring pressure to bear to encourage those responsible for the situation to reform their ways and to bring peace where there is currently war and tragedy and suffering. Shedding light on issues on our agenda is therefore extremely important, and is the flip side of the coin of being confidential where we need to be confidential.

I am not talking about shedding light on an issue in order to shock or horrify people, or to still less to score political points. What is mean is that by focusing on a deteriorating situation, we should show the world that we are watching and that there is at least something that we can do to try to prevent a bad situation from getting even worse. If we do all of that in private, then we are giving a free pass to those who are trying to prosecute the savage, mindless war — by which I mean the Syrian regime against its own people. Transparency is therefore an important part of our toolkit when it comes to trying to do a better job at conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The second, completely different, issue that I want to focus on where there is the same tension between confidentiality and transparency is the selection process for the next Secretary-General. We have now held three straw polls. Unsurprisingly, the full results were available on Twitter within a few minutes of the polling. I think that we are getting the worst of both worlds. What we should be aiming for is confidentiality as it relates to the candidates. Anything that we talk to them about in the privacy of the Security Council should remain absolutely confidential.

But then there are some other issues, including the results, where I feel as though we could afford to be much more transparent without damaging the candidates' dignity in any way. I would favour having another look at what we do with the results of the straw polls, while trying to be more transparent and building up the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in the meantime. To refuse to go in that direction reminds me of the English King Canute, who tried to hold back the incoming tide. We are not going to do so; we will just look foolish by trying to keep those results private. I would be in favour of more confidentiality on some issues but much more transparency on others in order to maximize the impact of our work.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President — Ramlan — and your entire team for your work this month, as well as to congratulate you on your presidency, which concludes today with success. I also appreciate the concept note that you have circulated in order to guide the discussion in this formal wrap-up session. Spain is in favour of a sharper focus in the debate on the issues in the wrap-up sessions, and we underscore our desire for transparency and for participation by all Member States. I will focus on two areas that I think were the most important in work of the Security Council this month. The first has to do with non-proliferation issues, and the second with the situation in Syria.

On the issue of non-proliferation, the month of August has brought us both bad and good news. On the subject of the bad news, we must once again lament the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued to ignore Security Council resolutions. The developing momentum in the situation in the Korean peninsula is particularly concerning, given that ballistic missile launches are taking place more often and with greater success in reaching nearby coastal areas of neighbouring States. This month, for the first time, we have seen the successful launch of a ballistic missile from a submarine, and the first one to fall within the exclusive economic zone of another State. Despite that disturbing situation, we also have to welcome the fact that the Security Council has regained its unity when it comes to the matter. On Friday, 26 August, we unanimously condemned the launching of missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, while also

reiterating our determination to adopt new, meaningful measures pursuant to resolution 2270 (2016).

Under the heading of good news, Spain is grateful to the Malaysian presidency for convening the open debate (see S/PV.7758) on non-proliferation, which took place on 23 August. The presence of the Secretary-General and of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the participation of 61 delegations and international organizations all served to highlight the great interest that exists in the issue. During that debate, we noted, on the one hand, that there existed shared concern about new threats — in particular given the link between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and the risks that have arisen due to technological and scientific advances. On the other hand, however, there was also a desire to strengthen preventive mechanisms and instruments, such as resolution 1540 (2004), so as to adapt them to the new context. The recent report of the Joint Implementation Mechanism (JIM) shows that the risks that resolution 1540 (2004) tries to prevent are not illusory or amorphous. On the contrary, they are very real risks, such as have already materialized in the case of Syria. The terrible facts in the JIM report should to serve as a stimulus for us to bolster the non-proliferation regime within the scope of the United Nations.

On the second issue —Syria — the assessment necessarily has to be a negative one, both from the perspective of the evolution of the conflict as well as from the vantage point of the Security Council's response. We began the month of August with a threat that the distribution of assistance to Aleppo could be blocked because of the fighting and the closure of the Castello Road. Several Council meetings were held at which we had an opportunity to discuss the issue in depth — from the Arria Formula meeting on 8 August to the open briefing on 22 August (see S/PV.7757). However, we end the month in nearly the same situation, with the United Nations calling for a 48-hour humanitarian pause in order to enter the city, so far without success.

All of us are aware of the dialogue between the co-Chairs of the International Syria Support Group. Spain is confident that the dialogue between the United States and the Russian Federation can contribute to renewing the cessation of hostilities — and even to opening the door to a new round of talks in Geneva, as has happened in the past. Nevertheless, the Security Council has a responsibility to support the work being done by the United Nations in Syria, in particular in the humanitarian area. That is why, in close contact with all of the members of the Council — especially Egypt and New Zealand — we will continue to follow developments in the situation very closely. I take this opportunity to congratulate New Zealand for the priority attention it intends to accord the issue in the programme of work for September.

Lastly, we are confident that the JIM report presented yesterday to the Council will allow us to ensure accountability with regard to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We thank you once again, Mr. President, and we welcome New Zealand and assure it of our full support during its presidency, which begins tomorrow.

Mr. Xu Zhongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. We commend Malaysia's presidency during the month of August and its steady steering of the Council's work to a successful conclusion. With respect to the Council's work during the month, I would like to emphasize the following three points.

First, on South Sudan, the Council held several thorough briefings and adopted resolution 2304 (2016), which adjusted the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. The situation is grave and complex. The international community must make concerted efforts to assist all parties in the country to return to the track of a political settlement and to implement the peace agreement in order to achieve peace and stability as soon as possible. China supports the resolution of African problems by Africans themselves, using their own methods. We appreciate the efforts and good offices on the part of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union (AU) and States of the region on the question of South Sudan. We support IGAD's leading role on the issue. It is our hope that the United Nations will establish political synergies with IGAD and the AU through communication and consultation to address the problem of South Sudan. We welcome the recent consultations held between the Chief of General Staff of the national forces of IGAD and the Transitional Government of National Unity of South Sudan on the regional protection force. We hope that they will also fully heed the views of the Transitional Government of National Unity in reaching an agreement on the specifics concerning the force.

Secondly, on Syria, certain areas of the country have recently experienced an escalation of conflict. China is deeply concerned and believes that a political solution is the only way out in addressing the question of Syria. We support the efforts of the United States and Russia, as co-Chairs of the International Syria Support Group, with a view to intensifying coordination. The international community should also take effective measures aimed at easing the humanitarian situation in the country, putting the ceasefire back on track and creating conditions conducive to a political settlement of the Syrian question. We welcome Russia's agreement on the United Nations initiative to call for weekly 48-hour humanitarian pauses in Aleppo. The international community should continue to support the leading role of the United Nations towards a political settlement of the Syrian question, including the work of Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, as well as urge the parties to resume the Geneva talks unconditionally. The parties in Syria should abandon the mindset of a military settlement to the Syrian question and commit themselves to dialogue and negotiation with a view to gradually finding a solution that is acceptable to all.

Thirdly, on counter-terrorism, on 30 August a terrorist suicide-bomber attacked the Chinese Embassy in Kyrgyzstan. China strongly condemns that serious terrorist attack. Terrorism is a common enemy of humankind. All forms of terrorism pose a threat to international peace and security. The international community should strengthen joint cooperation in order to adopt universal standards aimed at firmly countering any such activity, under any pretext or against any country. The United Nations and the Security Council should play the leading role in counter-terrorism activities, which should be guided by the Charter of the United Nations. The international community should step up effective coordination to establish a united front against terrorism and to ensure that terrorists have nowhere to hide. As an important member of the coalition against terrorism, China will continue actively participating in bilateral and multilateral cooperation against terrorism in order to contribute positively and constructively to the maintenance of international peace and security.

China also wishes New Zealand all the best during its presidency during the month of September.

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt): On behalf of the three African members of the Security Council, we wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your presidency and for a job well done during a very busy month with many achievements. We also look forward to the New Zealand presidency and to cooperating and supporting it in ensuring a successful outcome.

On behalf of the African members of the Council, I wish to highlight the following conclusions, with a focus on key messages emanating from the two open debates organized under the Malaysian presidency — namely, on children and armed conflict (see S/PV.7753) and on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (see S/PV.7758). Towards the end of the statement, I will share a few thoughts on working methods, as requested by you, Sir, in your very helpful concept paper.

The convening of the open debate on children and armed conflict was both timely and important, at a time when we are witnessing the plight of children as they suffer the scourge of war and armed conflict. We believe that the international community still lacks appropriate tools for effective preventive action. There are a number of messages we can draw from the debate that we would like to highlight, and on which we call for further action by the Council and its Working Group chaired by Malaysia.

First, children are the most vulnerable and the most affected by indiscriminate attacks during armed conflict, in particular attacks on densely populated areas — including schools, hospitals and medical facilities — by military forces and armed and terrorist groups. Such attacks represent criminal acts, and therefore call for measures to hold the perpetrators to account. We underscore the importance of resolution 2286 (2016), on medical care in armed conflict, as a policy framework for the prevention of such attacks in the future.

Secondly, concerning measures to protect children in post-conflict situations, there is a need to reach agreement on specific commitments related to child protection throughout peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes. Those should include requirements for the rapid release of children from armed forces and non-State armed groups.

Thirdly, the international community is called upon to review the recommendations of the Graça Machel report (see A/51/306), in particular those relating to displaced and refugee children, given the shortage of financial resources available to carry out the recommendations relating to host States in

particular. Moreover, much work remains to be done with regard to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence, as well as the effects of sanctions regimes on the health, nutrition, psychological rehabilitation and education of children in armed conflict. In addition, greater emphasis is required on social reintegration of children through psychological support, educational programmes and professional training.

Fourthly, the mandates of the mechanisms established to address the plight of children in armed conflict continue to focus on information gathering with regard to violations committed in hotbeds of tension and conflict. Their reports are only a means of monitoring, and fall short of providing the necessary practical and realistic means of protecting children — a task that falls under their mandate.

Fifthly, and finally, there is a need for a three-fold action plan: guaranteeing the protection of children, strengthening preventive measures, and ensuring accountability for perpetrators of war crimes.

The convening of the debate on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction highlighted that the world has become more complicated and dangerous in the light of the evolving security challenges, including the expansion of terrorist organizations worldwide. The fact that such organizations have had access and have been able to use chemical weapons in areas of the Middle East is alarming and calls for determined action. We can draw several conclusions from that debate, as well as further points of potential progress to be explored by the Council.

First, the international community currently faces emerging security threats arising from newly developed technologies, especially those with dual-use features, such as 3-D printing, the Dark Web, cyberwarfare, genetic editing, synthetic biology and unmanned aerial vehicles.

Secondly, within the framework of the comprehensive review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), we have to focus on the further enhancement of cooperation and coordination with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations by prioritizing technical support and assistance, as well as the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise in that domain. Accordingly, technical assistance and capacity-building are vital for developing countries.

Thirdly, African States spare no effort, regionally and internationally, to contribute to the promotion of the implementation process of resolution 1540 (2004) and the subsequent resolution 1977 (2011). There is a need to strengthen the mechanism under the former in order to keep pace with the rapid developments at the political, technical, scientific and technological levels.

Fourthly, the three African members of the Security Council would like to reiterate that the sole, most effective path to prevent terrorism and to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction is the total elimination of those weapons in all regions of the world.

With regard to the working methods, the three African members of the Council stress the need for more action-oriented discussions and more transparency in the work of the Council. In that regard, they first invite Council members to continue strengthening their interaction with countries that are on the Council's agenda, as well as with countries of the region, by holding more frequent informal interactive dialogues, particularly before renewing the mandate of peace missions deployed by the Council, in order to allow more discussion on the political and operational aspects of the conflicts. The interactive dialogue held on Mali last month was a case in point and was very helpful.

Secondly, the three African members of the Council welcome the field visits made this year to several African countries, which provided the Council opportunities to interact with the main political stakeholders, such as national authorities, and with regional and international partners with respect to issues pertaining to efforts aimed at fostering peace processes in those countries.

Finally, the three African members of the Council would like to stress the importance of strengthening the Council's cooperation with the African Union Peace and Security Council. The annual consultations in that regard, as well as country-specific informal dialogues, such as the one about to happen later this week in Addis Ababa, on South Sudan and the question of financing peace operations authorized by the Security Council and launched by the African Union or regional organizations, are of vital importance.

Once again, I would like to thank you and congratulate you, Mr. President. We look forward to working with the next President, the Ambassador of New Zealand.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, we would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this session to review the work of the Security Council during the month of August. We would also like to congratulate you and your entire delegation for the outstanding work carried out this month. We are grateful for the concept note you prepared, Sir, to guide our discussion today.

Turning to your point, Mr. President, about potential areas of convergence between the Security Council and the General Assembly in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we believe that, rather than viewing it as a matter of convergences, the Assembly and the Council could employ a division of labour based on the competencies enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council is charged with addressing disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction from the perspective of the fight against terrorism, particularly as it relates to adopting measures to prevent non-State actors, including terrorist groups, from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt that the globalization of commercial, logistical and economic transactions has made the task of controlling proliferation more complex, and has made it easier for non-State actors and terrorists to take advantage of transnational criminal networks in their attempt to obtain weapons of mass destruction. It is also true that terrorism has expanded its violent methods and terrorists are more determined than ever to obtain weapons of mass destruction and to use them on civilians, as has occurred in Syria and Iraq.

In that connection, the Security Council plays a fundamental role through resolution 1540 (2004), and in fact has made strides in efforts to prevent, investigate and respond to the threats and risks linked to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Resolution 1540 (2004) has made it possible for the international community to make headway in tackling the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors. That has been accomplished, inter alia, by improving reports, bolstering or adopting new legislation, providing assistance, cooperating at the regional level and drawing up national plans of action. We are concerned that the Security Council is not yet ready to assert that the only way to avoid the destruction of the environment or of humankind by way of such weapons, especially nuclear weapons, is through their total elimination. That being the case, we believe that the Security Council, as an organ, finds itself constrained in spearheading the process of nuclear disarmament.

It falls to the General Assembly — whose very first resolution focused on disarmament — to work towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the negotiation and adoption of an internationally verifiable treaty banning the production of fissionable material, as well as a comprehensive treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons, among others.

We also believe there to be another urgent, pending issue, namely, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In that connection, we urge Israel and other countries to unblock action on the issue and to take concrete steps towards signing an agreement to that effect.

The permanent members of the Security Council, as nuclear-weapon States, have a fundamental role to play in that process. Achieving a world free of nuclear weapons necessarily entails a broad discussion on all issues related to disarmament and international security, based on the principles of preserving the security of the individual parties and not allowing any State to gain an advantage over any other, always with a view to ensuring military stability without affecting security and without weapons of mass destruction. That discussion process should be open, broad and inclusive, as set out in the proposal for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Turning to the second part of your concept note, Sir, in connection with lessons learned and possible ways to improve the future performance of the Security Council in terms of conflict prevention — including, for example, with regard to South Sudan, Syria and Western Sahara — we believe that a critical area that has been overlooked when in comes to conflict prevention in the Security Council is the mobilizing of resources for sustaining peace, which is essential for generating peace dividends, including creating jobs, providing public services, establishing solid political institutions and providing justice.

We believe that preventing conflicts requires more diplomacy and dialogue, and fewer threats and sanctions. There appears to be a tendency among some members of the Security Council to apply Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, instead of the

mechanisms aimed at preventing conflict as provided under Chapter VI of the Charter — in practice, turning to the various regional and subregional organizations around the world. Resolving conflicts is always a political undertaking, and there is therefore a need for political will to prevent and resolve them.

We also want to highlight the damage done to the Organization, and the world in general by, the double standards by which the Council often operates. We have spoken here about working methods, confidentiality and transparency, but I would like to talk about silence. There are issues that are subject to an absolutely untransparent silence on the part of the Council. When members of this organ work actively to prevent the dissemination of information about conflict situations in certain parts of the world, all members of the international community are kept in the dark about key aspects that ought to be addressed in order to prevent conflicts. That is the case in Palestine and Western Sahara, for instance, where silence and the untransparent manner in which those issues are addressed call into question the entire international security and peacekeeping apparatus that serves to underpin relations among States.

I would mention, for example, the incident on 11 August in the vicinity of Al-Guerguerat, where Moroccan military forces several times crossed the berm, in violation of the ceasefire agreement, into the Bir Gandouz sector, next to the first Sahrawi-controlled military region. We believe that such events do not receive adequate attention from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. By not being provided with timely information on such developments, it was not until 26 August that members of the Council were informed — in closed consultations requested by my country — about what had occurred. Such practices are inacceptable. For we cannot overlook, for the sake of political expediency, protracted conflict situations that have an impact on international peace and security.

Furthermore, the situation in the occupied territories of the State of Palestine has continued to worsen, without the Council being able to send a clear message demanding Israel to end its settlement policy — the consequence of its prolonged military occupation for nearly half a century. We have insisted that the Israeli occupation is the main cause of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in the occupied territories. More than five years have elapsed since the adoption of a Security Council resolution on the Palestinian question.

To conclude, we would like to mention the open debate (see S/PV.7753) on children and armed conflict, during which a considerable number of countries supported the agenda of the Security Council on the subject. It is necessary to highlight that the issues of accountability and protecting children in armed conflict must be addressed in a non-selective and impartial manner, while respecting the respective mandates of the mechanisms established to that end in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of United Nations, applicable international law and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

I reiterate our congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to your delegation for the outstanding way in which you have led the work of the Council during the month of August. Once again, we extend our hand in cooperation with New Zealand in what we are certain will be a successful piloting of the Council's business in the month of September.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): Please accept our sincere congratulations, Sir, on having successfully steered the Security Council's work during the month of August. We also would like to commend the highly professional work of the entire Malaysian delegation, which allowed the Council to conduct its daily business in an effective and efficient manner. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Malaysia on its National Day of Independence, which falls on today's date. Because the Council's formal wrap-up sessions are not held regularly, which is regrettable in our opinion, we appreciate the holding of today's meeting.

At the outset of Malaysia's presidency, the Council held an open debate (see S/PV.7753) on the subject of children and armed conflict. The debate vividly demonstrated that, even though, on a fundamental level, United Nations States Members appreciate the gravity of the problem, they have different views and approaches on how to address the subject. Regardless of divergent views on some aspects of the issue, the crux of the matter is that, without eliminating conflicts, or at least reducing their intensity, children will continue to bear the brunt of suffering in war zones, and the international community will continue to grapple with the challenge of how to help affected children. In that regard, it is absolutely crucial that the Council redouble its efforts to prevent potential conflicts and contribute to the settlement of ongoing ones, thereby removing the core cause of threats to the lives and well-being of children and other vulnerable groups.

The other open debate (see S/PV.7758), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), was also very pertinent to the current state of affairs on the world stage. The integrity of the global non-proliferation regime has been severely compromised by the irresponsible actions of some actors. In a world in which established norms and international instruments can be blatantly violated without accountability and where might makes right, it is particularly disturbing that some exploit existing gaps in the system and feel free to pursue WMD programmes of their own. In fact, in some cases, like that of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we are witnessing a worrying trend of complete disregard for international obligations and the relevant Security Council resolutions. Rogue non-State actors similarly are attempting to acquire WMDs, and the most recent conclusions of the Joint Investigative Mechanism on the use of mustard gas by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant looks almost banal in the current environment. It is anything but banal. The violations committed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must not be treated as a routine item on the Council's agenda, and law and order in the international arena must be upheld if global non-proliferation efforts are not to be wasted.

Another hallmark activity of the Council during the month of August was the selection process of the next Secretary-General. So far, we have held three straw polls. While the results of the polls are no secret to anyone even remotely interested in the subject, the Council as an organ persists in maintaining its old ways while rejecting any attempt to reform its work. In the light of the recent changes made to the process for the selection of the Secretary-General, characterized by the unprecedented openness and transparency introduced by the General Assembly, the Council's fascination with so-called "established practice' is truly incomprehensible. The steadfast refusal by some Council members to consider the possibility of formally making the results of the straw polls public does no good either to the Council or the candidates. As we all have learned, the results are leaked almost immediately, and the Council subsequently finds itself in a situation in which it is unable to provide transparency as to its work or to ensure confidentiality to the candidates. On that matter, I would like to underline that our delegation, together with many others, advocates for a more transparent process, including properly informing the general United Nations membership of the outcomes of the straw polls. The selection process is far from being over, and nothing bars the Council from introducing long-awaited changes in its work.

The Council is usually preoccupied with grave and somore issues. Against that background, the signing of a final peace agreement by the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia was a much welcome reprieve. We welcome the successful completion of efforts to end the 50-year-old conflict. We are ready to engage constructively in efforts to consider the Council's next steps to support the peace process in Colombia.

In conclusion, I once again congratulate you, Sir, on the successful completion of Malaysia's presidency, and I would like to convey a message of our full support to the incoming presidency of New Zealand in the difficult month of September.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation): We would like to thank you personally, Sir, and the delegation of Malaysia for effectively presiding over the Security Council in August. That always demands intensive efforts. Your presidency was characterized by a very busy agenda. We note the timeliness of holding a meeting (see S/PV.7758) on the issue of non-proliferation and resolution 1540 (2004) . As we all know, the global non-proliferation architecture is based on three components — the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The Russian Federation takes an active part in all of them.

Resolution 1540 (2004) provides another basis for non-proliferation efforts. It is a reliable shield against the eventuality of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-State actors. We are sure that the implementation of the resolution by all countries and in full is an urgent task facing the international community. Information that non-State actors have gained access to chemical weapons requires detailed investigation and a response from the Council. It is unacceptable that non-State actors be given any form of support allowing them access to weapons of mass destruction.

As always, the African cluster was at the centre of the Council's attention. On several occasions this past month, the Security Council discussed the situation in the Sudan and South Sudan. We abstained in the voting on resolution 2304 (2016). As is often the case in dealing with South Sudan, during the drafting stage the American sponsors of the resolution ignored the legitimate concerns of our and many other delegations

on important issues affecting the sovereignty of the host country, including the deployment of the Regional Protection Force and a possible arms embargo. The fact that the modalities of those forces require substantive fine-tuning is shown by the fact that there are ongoing discussions on that issue by delegations of South Sudan and key regional players. We welcome those discussions and hope that there will be a constructive exchange of information on a whole range of issues relating to the settlement of the South Sudan issue during the meeting scheduled for 5 September in Addis Ababa. That will be a meeting between members of the Security Council, representatives of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development plus format.

It must be noted, unfortunately that some delegations periodically use their status as members of the Security Council to politicize issues for propaganda purposes in order to shed light on certain subjects, rather than make quiet, painstaking efforts to maintain international peace and security in the framework of the statutory powers of the Security Council. An illustration of that trend was the holding of an Arria Formula on 8 August on the situation in Aleppo. The holding of that event was announced just the day before, and the meeting itself was another propaganda show presenting tried and tested political standard fare. Its organizers were not guided by the goal of settling the Syrian problem, but rather sought to advance their own personal agendas, which was far more important to them.

We were also surprised at the Secretariat's organization of that meeting. There was a live broadcast of the meeting, although earlier — for example, with regard to the organization of the Arria Formula meeting on Palestine — representatives of the Secretariat made reference to established practice and said that a broadcast of such events was not possible. We were therefore very puzzled by the change in approach. We expect the Secretariat to provide a detailed explanation of the issues raised. We believe that the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions should consider that problem when it prepares the updated version of presidential note S/2010/507. I would like to remind colleagues in the Council that Arria Formula meetings were conceived as informal, confidential meetings for frank exchanges of private views on issues covered by the Security Council's mandate. We cannot agree with the practice followed by members of the Council to abuse that format and use it for advertising their own private initiatives.

Turning to Syria, we must refer to the inhumane actions on the part of the Syrian radical opposition, which interrupted the United Nations humanitarian operation in Aleppo, which had already been prepared. After agreeing to allow convoys of trucks with humanitarian aid for the civilian population to go through, at the last minute those jihadist-oppositionists began to set obviously unacceptable and unrealistic preconditions. Such a clearly defiant step obviously reveals the true face of those pseudo-fighters for the Syrian people. They are not ashamed to exploit the difficult humanitarian situation so as to achieve their own destructive goals.

For our part, we will continue to work in a constructive manner and in cooperation with the United Nations in preparing the humanitarian operation in Aleppo along the lines of what we are already doing in that area. We also confirm our readiness to hold the 48-hour humanitarian pause so as to deliver aid to those areas that can be reached. However, we would like once again to remind Council members that the Russian side has responded promptly to the appropriate proposal from the United Nations and joined in the work to address the issues relating to the secure passage of convoys along the Castello Road and reach an agreement with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the modalities for humanitarian operations.

In conclusion, I would like to wish every success to the delegation of New Zealand, which will lead the Council in September. The month of September is usually a very busy one, and we want to assure our colleagues of our full support.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and your entire delegation for the excellent work carried out during the month of August. In addition, I also take this opportunity to wish New Zealand a successful presidency during the month of September and to assure it of our readiness to collaborate to ensure its success.

I would like to begin by thanking you, Sir, for convening this formal wrap-up session and for circulating the concept note yesterday. In line with that note, I promise that I will not exceed the 5-minute limit.

As my delegation has said on past occasions, this is a format that enables us to make a formal statement during the meeting, and it is also an opportunity for anyone who would like to hear our statement but is unable to attend to do so through our website, regardless of where they are. this is therefore an exercise in transparency, which I must highlight. My delegation has pointed out on more than one occasion that it would represent a step towards transparency if, whenever we have a format that includes a briefing followed by consultations, delegations could make their statements here in the Chamber. I must admit that, to some degree, we have already begun to do that in dealing with the Syrian humanitarian track. We must therefore highlight that as a notable development during August. However, we hope that in the near future that practice can also be extended to many other issues.

August was not a productive month when it comes to humanitarian issues. The situations in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and other areas have been showing us that we have not yet been able to find the necessary solutions to alleviate the suffering of the people who are victims of armed conflicts. I would like to pause for a moment to reflect on what the Council was not able to do — or, rather, failed to do.

Although there is clear awareness in the Council of the serious humanitarian crises — or rather catastrophes — in Syria and Yemen, we were unable to agree on the text of a press release following consultations on Yemen on 3 August, nor were we able to do so on Syria on 9 and 22 August. It is hard to imagine what civilians in a besieged area in Syria might think if one of us were to try to explain to them the reasons why we were unable to issue a statement condemning the situation, or what a child who has nothing to eat and no medicines to treat their ailments might think of us; or if that child cannot go to school because of the conflict, or was recruited by the terrorists or suffered sexual violence at their hands.

Unfortunately, the month of August once again saw a blockage in the Security Council's ability in the face of issues for which it bears inescapable responsibility.

Mr. Lamek (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your presidency during the month of August, during which you presided over two open debates (see S/PV.7753 and S/PV.7758) and two straw polls, two straw polls. The straw polls showed that the Council's procedures, which you, Sir, very effectively managed, indeed work. The best proof of that lies in the fact that the Council was able methodically to move forward in a unified manner on the very demanding work of selecting the individual who will lead the Organization as of next year. At the appropriate time, the Council willl have to make its recommendation to the General Assembly, pursuant to Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations, in such a way as to enable the man or woman who will become the next Secretary-General to prepare for that difficult task.

I would also like to say a few words on Syria, which calls for the Security Council to assume its responsibilities. The consultations that took place yesterday following the submission of the report of the Joint Investigative Mechanism served to bring us face-to-face with our responsibilities. That is not vague wording, but a reality. The use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and by Da'esh, as the report clearly established, constitutes a step backward that we cannot allow to go without a response, or there will be serious consequences. Those who committed those crimes — who are now known to us — must face up to their weighty responsibility.

The month of August also saw the Council closely following the very worrying humanitarian situation in Syria. The Security Council held an important and disturbing Arria Formula meeting on 8 August. I hope that it will contribute to raising greater awareness about the disaster in Aleppo. I would like to thank all the delegations that took part, even if some of them felt that they were implicated. The Council moved to act on the situation in Aleppo owing to the humanitarian crisis. In the consultations that took place on 9 August Mr. Stephen O'Brien and Mr. Staffan de Mistura expressed their deep concern and called upon the two co-Chairs of the International Syria Support Group to find a solution during their discussions in Geneva. On 22 August (see S/PV.7756), Mr. O'Brien spoke here of his great concern about the failure to deliver humanitarian aid to all the besieged towns in the country. He also expressed his hope that that would be the last time he had to ask for humanitarian access, which is an obligation guaranteed under international humanitarian law. Unfortunately, we are very far from that. On this issue too, the Council must show itself to be up to its responsibilities.

I just mentioned the chemical weapons in Syria. In fact, the issue of non-proliferation issue was also

at the centre of the Council's work this month. You, Mr. President, convened an open debate (see S/PV.7758) on the isue. However, the Council also dealt with the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Fortunately, we regained our unity this month, following a further, irresponsible provocation by the authorities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Council condemned in no uncertain terms the ballistic missile tests undertaken by Pyongyang, which constitute a direct threat to its neighbours. I recall that a missile landed this past month in the territorial waters of Japan, a Member of the United Nations and of the Security Council. It was also a threat to the non-proliferation regime, on which our collective security is based. We must reinforce our message and specify new listings so that the authorities in Pyongyang have no misunderstanding as to our determination to prevent them from continuing to advance their illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

By way of conclusion, on the issue of South Sudan, the month of August included follow-up by the Council with regard to the worsening of the situation in that country since July with the outbreak of violence in Juba. It was important for the Council to remind everyone of the importance it gives to the protection of civilians. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan is operating in a particularly difficult environment and is encountering a number of obstacles in implementing its mandate. It was therefore important for the Council to reiterate its full support for the Mission. The Council also reminded the parties that they should recommit themselves to peace. Along with its regional partners, such as Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union, the Council must continue to assume its responsibilities, as it will do in the coming days by undertaking a visit to South Sudan. It is high time for the Council to finally put in place an essential arms embargo for that beleaguered country — a common sense decision that we should have taken a long time ago.

I should like to conclude by mentioning Lebanon and pointing out that we adopted a strong presidential statement at the end of July (S/PRST/2016/10) to deplore the vacancy in the presidency. During the consultations with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on 24 August, we pointed to the situation in southern Lebanon 10 years after the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006). We reiterated our collective support for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in carrying out its mandate to safeguard the cessation of hostilities. On 30 August, we unanimously adopted resolution 2305 (2016) to extend the mission's mandate for another year. We welcome the Council's support for UNIFIL and for the stability of southern Lebanon — in a region, the Middle East, that does not deserve another crisis.

The month of August has therefore been one of great substance, and I would like to thank you, Sir, for your work during your presidency. I also welcome the presidency of New Zealand for the month of September, which will be equally busy.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): I congratulate you, Mr. President, for guiding the Security Council through the month of August, which turned out to be quite a full month of developments, good and bad — but mostly bad, unfortunately. Today, I would like to focus on just a few points, as suggested in the concept note. I would like to concentrate on North Korea and South Sudan. In doing so, I would like to stress the importance of the unity, action and effectiveness of the Security Council.

On North Korea, my delegation stresses the importance of the united message sent by the Council in the press statement (SC/12494) to strongly condemn the submarine-launched ballistic missile launched on 23 August and the series of preceding launches by North Korea, which were in flagrant violation of obligations under Security Council resolutions. Those launches contribute to North Korea's development of nuclear-weapon-delivery systems and increase tensions in the region and beyond. The launches, including one impacting in Japans air defence identification zone, pose an increasing threat to Japan's national security.

We welcome the fact that the Council demonstrated unity in condemning acts of provocation by North Korea through its press statement on 26 August, but that is not enough. We must not let those violent acts pass without consequence. In the light of the seriousness of the situation, the Council should consider taking further measures in response to North Korea's clear and continuing threats to international peace and security, bearing in mind the determination that we expressed in resolution 2270 (2016) to take further significant measures in the event of a further nuclear test or launch. I would also like to repeat the call of my Government to urge all Member States to redouble their efforts to fully implement and enforce the relevant

Council resolutions, including by submitting national implementation reports.

On South Sudan, Japan has contributed to nation-building in that country through various forms of assistance and by contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Japan supports the strengthening of UNMISS through resolution 2304 (2016). In addition to the full implementation by the parties of the agreement on a resolution to the conflict, the establishment of a regional protection force under the basic principles of peacekeeping, including the consent of the parties, represents the most effective response to address the situation on the ground. The upcoming Council visit to South Sudan will be an important opportunity for the Council to convey a clear message to the Transitional Government of National Unity.

Before concluding, I would like to stress the importance that Japan attaches to improving the working methods of the Council. In that context, allow me to briefly touch upon the new and inclusive process for selecting the chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council for 2017. We are in the implementation phase of the new note S/2016/619 by the President of the Security Council, of 15 July. From the beginning of August, as co-facilitators of the process, the United Kingdom and Japan have been consulting informally with the newly elected and the incumbent members of the Council. We will undertake further consultations in accordance with the text and spirit of the presidential note.

I would again like to thank the Malaysian representative and his delegation for all of the good work they have done during the month of August. I wish the representative of New Zealand a successful presidency in the month of September. We would like to assure him that we will provide all of the support he will need.

Ms. Sison (United States of America): As we head into September and a new General Assembly high season, it is appropriate for us to take a moment to consider some of the Security Council priorities we have addressed during the busy month of August, which we will need to continue to address moving forward. In particular, I would like to focus on the Council's work on Syria and South Sudan and to briefly touch on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and our ongoing deliberations on the selection of the next Secretary-General.

As we have for so many months, in August the Council focussed on the political, humanitarian and security situations in Syria, as other colleagues have noted. I, too, would like to take a moment to recall the very moving Arria Forumula meeting that the United Kingdom, France, New Zealand and Ukraine hosted with us, where we heard directly from those who witnessed the siege in Aleppo. They were individuals who had worked so hard to try to relieve some of the terrible suffering there, including medical doctors and first-responder White Helmets. The scenes they described and images they shared showed clearly a humanitarian catastrophe of searing scale. Cutting off food and medicine to hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians undermines the cessation of hostilities and plays into the hands of violent extremist groups. The next day, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Stephen O'Brien and Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura met with the Council and called for an immediate renewal of the cessation of hostilities and a pause to enable humanitarian access.

Incredibly, largely because of the Syrian regime's obstruction, no inter-agency United Nations convoys were able to deliver assistance from 1 to 23 August, and from 23 to 29 August just four United Nations inter-agency convoys delivered assistance to besieged or hard-to-reach areas in Syria. We simply must see improvements in humanitarian access. As I said in the Chamber a little more than one week ago, while the United States condemns all parties to the conflict that use siege tactics, we must be clear that the Al-Assad regime and its international backers are responsible for the suffering of the overwhelming majority of Syrians living under siege.

That leads me to a point I would like to make regarding the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Just yesterday, we received a disturbing but important briefing from High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Kim Won-soo and Joint Investigative Mechanism Head Virginia Gamba. We are reviewing the findings of the Joint Investigative Mechanism of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and United Nations. But, based on what we have heard, the case is strong and clear that a robust Council response is warranted. It is essential that we come together to ensure consequences for those who have used chemical weapons in Syria.

Another country where the status quo is unbearable is South Sudan. The Security Council took important

action this month to respond to calls from key regional partners to establish a regional protection force within the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Resolution 2304 (2016) sets out three priorities for the 4,000-strong regional protection force: first, facilitaing safe and free movement in Juba; secondly, protecting key facilities; and, thirdly, preventing attacks against civilians, the United Nations and humanitarian actors. The force will have the authority to use all the necessary means to carry out those responsibilities. Those efforts will support the broader mission of UNMISS to protect civilians, monitor human rights, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and support the implementation of the peace agreement. We look forward to the Council mission that Senegal and the United States will lead to South Sudan starting tomorrow.

Another challenge on the Council's docket that requires resolve involves the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Again, and more than once, the Council was required to meet urgently to address a new provocation by North Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions, and the advancements in its ballistic-missile capabilities in particular, cannot be ignored.

I would also like to mention our work on the selection of the next Secretary-General. The Council held its second and third straw polls in August, and we feel that the process is moving in the right direction. But we must stay focussed on our deliberations, despite the busy month ahead. Even as we plan for the arrival of many of our countries' leaders in just a few weeks, we look forward to continuing our efforts in September to identify the best qualified candidate to lead the Organization into the next decade.

Finally, I would like to thank Malaysia for its superb leadership of the Council this month, and to offer our support to New Zealand as it takes up the gavel in the busy month of September.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malaysia.

I wish to thank my colleagues for the many kind words extended to me and my delegation. We are truly appreciative of the support extended and for the constructiveness demonstrated by all Security Council members throughout the month of August, during which Malaysia had the honour and privilege to preside over the Council. I also wish to thank all delegations for participating in the wrap-up session today.

The joint statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the three African members of the Council —Angola, Egypt and Senegal — highlighted the flexibility of this meeting's format, as envisioned in the note by the President S/2010/507. Malaysia continues to believe that formal wrap-ups such as these provide an excellent opportunity for the Council's self-reflection in an open and transparent manner. While acknowledging that interactivity, especially with non-Council members, is an issue, we continue to believe that alternating between formal and informal, or Toledo-style wrap-ups, as has been the practice for most of the year, at least provides a good mix and balances the need for accountability and interactivity.

As a final word on working methods, my delegation would strongly encourage Japan, in its capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, and in the context of the upcoming comprehensive review of note 507, to thoroughly consider the need for the Council to better manage the expectations of the wider membership, especially with regard to transparency in the Council's work.

From the vantage point afforded by the President's seat, I am pleased to note that, despite the expectation that August would be somewhat less eventful, that was hardly the case. That is by no means to suggest that we had expected or anticipated the many situations that broke out or flared up. Rather, the programme of wor' that we adopted provided sufficient flexibility to accommodate a range of issues. For the record, the Council adopted a total of nine products throughout August. Two of them were key resolutions, namely, resolution 2304 (2016), on South Sudan, and resolution 2305 (2016), on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which we adopted yesterday. We also adopted an important presidential statement (S/PRST/2016/13) in support of the ongoing political and election processes in Somalia. Five press statements were adopted. Two of them expressed the Council's strong condemnation of terrorist attacks in Turkey and in Kabul. Other situations on which the Council pronounced itself included denouncing the killings of civilians in North Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on the Sudan and South Sudan, particularly our support for the African Union High-level Implementation Panel road map agreement. Finally, a press statement was adopted that expressed the Council's collective concern about developments in the Korean peninsula.

Beyond those outcomes, significant discussions were held on a range of other issues and situations. As mentioned by earlier speakers, the Council's early action to support the peace process in Colombia is noteworthy. In that regard, we look forward to working closely with other Council members to ensure that the gains made can be consolidated through the United Nations coordinated support and facilitation, with the assistance of the guarantor and accompanying countries, including fellow Council member Venezuela.

I also wish to express my delegation's deepest sympathy and condolences to the Chinese delegation on the suicide car-bomb attack against the Chinese Embassy in Bishkek yesterday. We strongly condemn the attack against premises that are inviolable under international law.

Malaysia strongly believes that there remains much scope for the Council to improve its record and practices with regard to conflict prevention. To that end, the initiative of improving the Council's situational awareness, spearheaded by New Zealand, is important and should benefit from thorough and positive consideration by all Council members.

Malaysia is also pleased to have convened the Council's annual open debate (see S/PV.7753) on children and armed conflict this month. We continue to believe that the mechanism on children and armed conflict remains one of the most effective instruments at Council's disposal to advocate for the protection of children in situations of armed conflict around the world. That important role and mandate must continue to command the Council's undivided support.

The high-level open debate (see S/PV.7758) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) was another initiative that Malaysia undertook this month. The debate was convened primarily to support the ongoing comprehensive review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), led by Spain. At the same time, the debate also sought to highlight the importance of continued international focus on the threat posed by the possible proliferation of WMDs and related materials and technologies to non-State actors and violent extremist groups. We believe that the debate successfully highlighted the linkages between ongoing conflicts and the possible risk of the proliferation of WMD material and technologies.

Finally, Malaysia is also honoured and deeply privileged to have been twice entrusted with facilitating the appointment process for the next Secretary-General this month. We continue to believe that the appointment process could benefit from greater transparency. After all, we are in the process of selecting an individual who will lead the United Nations at a time when it is beset by significant challenges that require strength and tenacity of will to overcome. As such, our decision as a Council must not depart from the expectations of the full range of partners and stakeholders, namely, the international community at large.

I wish to conclude by expressing once again, on behalf of the Malaysian delegation, our deepest appreciation to all Council members for the support and constructive cooperation rendered to us throughout the month. We sincerely hope that the spirit of flexibility, compromise and goodwill that is a hallmark of the Council and its members will continue to prevail.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Before adjourning the meeting, as this is the last scheduled meeting of the Council for the month of August, I would like again to express the sincere appreciation of the delegation of Malaysia to the members of the Council, especially my colleagues the Permanent Representatives and their respective staffs, as well as to the secretariat of the Council, for all the support they have given us. It has been a busy month indeed, and one in which we rallied to consensus on several important issues within our purview. We could not have done it alone without the hard work, support and positive contributions of every delegation and of the representatives of the secretariat, includinig all the relevant Conference Officers and interpreters. As we end our presidency, I know I speak on behalf of the Council in wishing the delegation of New Zealand good luck in the month of September.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.